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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/602,708	06/25/2003	Tomohisa Okuno	2936-0179P	9987
2292	7590	04/19/2004	EXAMINER	
BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH PO BOX 747 FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747			LUU, AN T	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER

2816

DATE MAILED: 04/19/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/602,708

Applicant(s)

OKUNO ET AL.

Examiner

An T. Luu

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 June 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/987,157.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3-31-04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

The present Patent Application, Serial #10/602,708, does not appear to be a Divisional Application since there is no Restriction presented in its parent Patent Application filed on Nov 12, 2001.

Double Patenting

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claim 1 is rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,617,898. Although the

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conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claim 1 of "898" and claim 1 of the instant application recite the same limitations in different terms (i.e., "*an output pulse generator*" vs. "*a pulse generator*" and "*the output voltage*" vs. "*an output voltage*").

Claim Objections

3. Claim 7 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. There is no additional limitation (i.e., structural and/or operational characteristics) of a voltage conversion circuit recited in claim 7.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 is incomplete for omitting essential elements, such omission amounting to a gap between the elements. See MPEP § 2172.01 (i.e., the claim does not include sufficient feature of the invention to provide support for the result recited in the last three lines of claim). The recitation of "*wherein an output voltage from the voltage conversion circuit is determined*

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according to a ratio of the pulse width to the pulse period of the pulse signal generated by the pulse generator", lines 4-6, will not, by itself, be capable of providing such result (i.e., determined according to a ratio). Claim 1 does not recite some device or element to perform the recited function because "a pulse generator", as recited in claim, is for generating a pulse signal. It has nothing to provide function of "*determined according to a ratio of the pulse width to the pulse period*".

As to claims 2-6, they are rejected for the same reason set forth above (i.e., there must be some device or element to perform a function of each claim because a structure, as recited in each claim, is not capable of producing the claimed result.

As to claim 4, "optimum" is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite. The term "optimum" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably appraised of the scope of the invention.

Claim 7 is rejected for dependent on the rejected claim noted above.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. Claims 1 and 7, as understood, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by the Ziegler et al reference (U.S. Patent 4,848,923).

Ziegler discloses in figures 1 a-b and 3 an apparatus comprising a pulse generator 5 for generating a pulse signal 16 having a fixed pulse width at variable pulse periods as shown in figure 1b wherein an output voltage from the apparatus 9 is determined according to a ratio of the pulse width to the pulse period of the pulse signal (via means of 12 and 17) as required by claim 1.

As to claim 7, it is inherent that the circuit of figure 1a is an semiconductor IC device since the above circuit comprising semiconductor device (i.e., LED, transistor) and element made up by semiconductor devices (i.e., oscillating circuit, frequency divider) and semiconductor devices are commonly packed in a substrate to form a semiconductor IC device.

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

There is no art rejection applied to claims 2-6 at the moment because Examiner cannot determine what elements are included in the claimed apparatus. The boundaries of claims are not defined to render a proper search to determine merits of claims.


9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to An T. Luu whose telephone number is 571-272-1746. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30-5:00.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Timothy P. Callahan can be reached on 571-272-1740. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

An T. Luu *ATL*
3-31-2004



TIMOTHY P. CALLAHAN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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